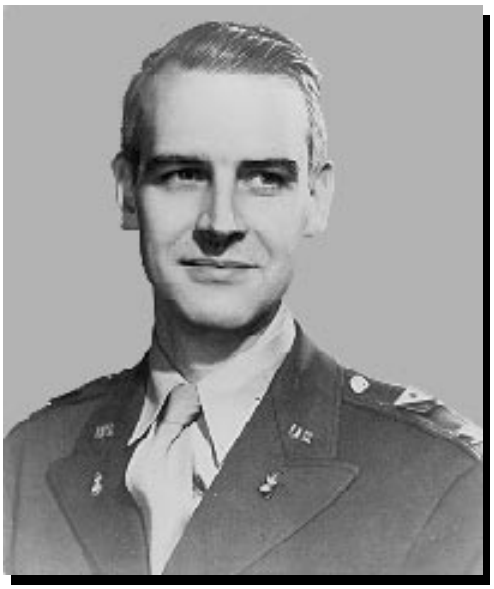
Ordnance Corps Hall of Fame

1982 Inductees

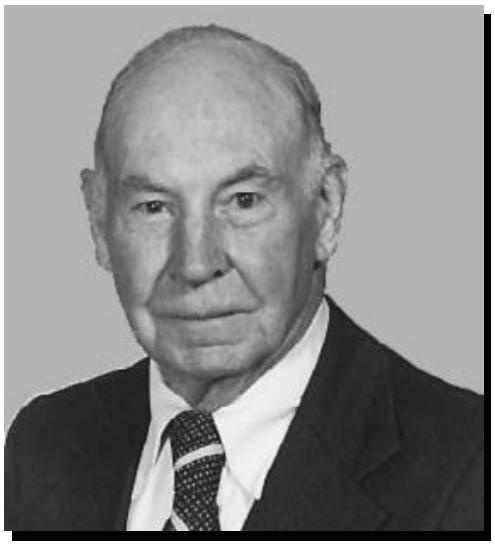


Brigadier General John D. Billingsley

Brigadier General John D. Billingsley was born in Fredricksburg, Virginia on November 4, 1904 and graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1928. His association with Ordnance began in 1932 when he was transferred to the Ordnance Department. During his career, he commanded The Ordnance School and participated in the Inchon landing in Korea as the senior Ordnance officer. But he distinguished himself most prominently while serving as Professor and Head of the Department of Ordnance at the U.S. Military Academy from 1951 to 1968. Early in his tenure as Professor of Ordnance, he transformed two Ordnance courses into Ordnance Engineering courses by applying principles of engineering, science, and mathematics to them. The two course texts, which were subsequently prepared under his guidance, have been highly acclaimed and frequently requested by governmental, industrial, and educational institutions. The texts have also been the basis for Ordnance Engineering courses developed by military academies of foreign countries allied with the U.S. His foresight in upgrading the courses to an engineering status enhanced the educational reputation of the Military Academy in academic and industrial circles, and better prepared cadets for careers in the Ordnance Corps. He was instrumental in making many other significant changes in the Ordnance curriculum at the Military Academy, such as the introduction of other Ordnance Engineering courses and Ordnance research programs. His achievements as Professor and Head of the Department of Ordnance not only brought the highest credit upon the Military Academy, but also exerted a profound and lasting influence on the minds, character, and professional development of the thousands of cadets and Ordnance officers with whom he served. General Billingsley died in May 1976.

Major General William K. Ghormley

Major General William K. Ghormley was born in Kansas on September 29, 1905 and graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1929. His outstanding career in the Ordnance Corps began in 1942 when he transferred from the Quartermaster Corps. He played a key role in reorganizing the Ordnance Special Weapons-Ammunition Command into an Ordnance Commodity Command for munitions. The commodity command concept has been the real backbone of logistics management since the 1950's. As the first Commander of the newly organized Army Munitions Command, he controlled all the phases of materiel management for Army munitions. In 1962, he introduced a combustible cartridge case for use with artillery and tank cannon which provided several distinct advantages over metal cases. Advantages to the user were reduction in ammunition weight; elimination of the need to salvage metal cases; reduction of spent cases and noxious gases in confined areas; and faster chambering of successive rounds. Advantages to the logistician were reduction in the use of strategic materials; elimination of the need to rework salvaged metal cases; reduction of production costs; and reduction of storage maintenance problems. The completely combustible case was an extremely important development because its advantages were obtained without sacrificing the safety, ruggedness, reliability, or accuracy of a round of ammunition. MG Ghormley continued his service to Ordnance after retirement. From 1964 to 1972 he was the Executive Vice-President of the American Ordnance Association. He skillfully led the Association through some very difficult periods and its transition to the American Defense Preparedness Association, as it is known today. General Ghormley died in 1983.



Mr. Wilfred W. Hosking

Mr. Wilfred W. Hosking was born in New York on June 2, 1899 and attended Clarkson College in Potsdam, New York. He began his distinguished 52-year career at Picatinny Arsenal in 1916 as a labor boy. He steadily advanced through the ranks to become the Director of the arsenal's Industrial Services Division, a position he held for 27 years. As a focal point for munitions research, development, and production, the division engaged in precision work on components of conventional and nuclear ammunition. In 1939, he developed an effective skeletal organization for munitions production which did much to improve America's capability in that area on the eve of WWII. As a recognized authority on ammunition production, he was frequently called upon to furnish urgently needed items of ammunition to American and allied forces in WWII. He was a driving force behind the critically important Selected Ammunition Program, which enhanced the effectiveness of several categories of conventional munitions. Under his leadership, large scale munitions production processes were established which served as the industry standard in the U.S. Mr. Hosking's advice on ammunition production was regularly solicited by the top management of America's leading industrial organizations. Among his other significant contributions to Army Ordnance were production of the low-altitude bomb fuse used in General Doolittle's surprise bombing raid on Tokyo in 1942; production of the 3.5-inch rocket, which helped stem communist armored attacks during the Korean War; and coordination with the Atomic Energy Commission to overcome difficulties and surpass production goals in nuclear weapons production. Mr. Hosking achieved the singular distinction of being the only civilian in the history of Picatinny Arsenal to hold a military position there when he was twice appointed Acting Deputy Commander.

Lieutenant General Fred Kornet, Jr.

Lieutenant General Fred Kornet, Jr. was born in Wortendyke, New Jersey on October 2, 1919. He served the Ordnance Corps as a dedicated logistician throughout his career, culminating as the Army's senior logistician. He commanded Watervliet Arsenal during a period of expanding U.S. military commitments to South Vietnam. His leadership in meeting the challenge of rapidly growing demands for the arsenal's products sparked a great increase in the arsenal's production only ten months after he assumed command. As commander of the U.S. Army Aviation Systems Command, he applied his extensive knowledge of computer systems to successfully implement the Army Materiel Command's ALPHA program there. ALPHA increased logistical efficiency by standardizing basic computer systems, equipment, and programs among various logistics agencies. He served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics from 1973 to 1975. During his tenure as the Army's senior logistician, his leadership led to the success of a number of programs designed to achieve simplicity and responsiveness in the Army's logistics system. He implemented the final phase of a comprehensive Logistics Offensive Program, which meshed the program with the Army's Logistics System Master Plan by means of automated management systems. Within months this phase overcame many of the immediate obstacles to efficient logistics support. Many other improvements in Army logistics were spawned through programs he promoted. Among these improvements were: simplification of paperwork at the user level, increased responsiveness to the user at the support level, development of a standard direct exchange system, refinement of selected item management techniques, expansion of the direct support system, and advancement of logistics research. General Kornet retired in 1975.